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ABSTRACT

There are several steps in the process of making contacts and negotiating agreements with organizations for the placement of communication interns. The first is to decide on what type of internship will be offered: personnel and employee relationships, training and development, community and public relations, marketing and sales management, or consulting and research. A second step is to decide which direction the program will take: entry level, technical work assignments or management-level, analytical work assignments. The next step revolves around placement locations: placing interns in local organizations or in major organization markets. A fourth step is related to making contacts and signing the contract and the process for each. Finally, once the preliminary work is completed, intern conditions must be negotiated including hours to be spent, what the goals in the specific organization will be, and what experiences will be provided for the intern. (Included are documents describing the requirements of an intern program and sample forms for companies and universities involved in intern programs.) (TJ)

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Making Contacts and Negotiating Agreements For Organizational Communication Internships

R. Wayne Pace
Brigham Young University

It seems to me that the process of making contacts and negotiating agreements with organizations for the placement of interns involves about five steps:

1. Defining the general types of internships to be sought.
2. Specifying the expected learning experiences for interns.
3. Identifying potential internship locations.
4. Making contacts and signing a contract.
5. Negotiating intern conditions with the orgainization.

Let me comment briefly on each of these steps in order to provide some frame of reference from which to begin a discussion of internships.

Types of Organizational Communication Internships

Type of internship is probably related to a person's concept of what students in organizational communication are preparing to do when they look for a job. Without attempting to identify specific positions, it seems to me that four or possibly five categories of activities characterize the places where internships might be located. In general, organizational communication internships may be of these types:

1. Personnel and Employee Relations
2. Training and Development
3. Community and Public Relations
4. Marketing and Sales Management
5. Consulting and Research

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Some overlapping of functional responsibilities probably exists in positions described by the above titles, suggesting a less than fully discrete set of categories. Hence, one major task of those preparing students for organizational communication internships is to more clearly define general types of internships.

Learning Experiences for Interns

Some key decisions related to the overall concept of what the intern program is attempting to accomplish must be made fairly early in the planning process. At least two major directions can be taken in an internship program:

1. Entry-level, technical work assignments
2. Management-level, analytical work assignments

In many instances, interns will probably receive some assignments in both directions, but the major concern in devising learning experiences for interns is the commitment of faculty toward one direction or the other. A commitment toward technical internships leads to student placements where interns replace some technically-trained employees and receive experience in entry-level tasks, sometimes leading to employment in those positions. The technical-level internship is often preferred by students since it sometimes allows them to receive preferential treatment in securing a job. A commitment to analytical internships leads to student placement where interns assist middle and top-level managers in analyzing and making decisions about how technical skills should be employed in achieving organization objectives. The intern often has the opportunity to experience uncertainty, see relationships, use creativity, and deal with ambiguity, all of which lead to later placement in management positions.

A document should be prepared in advance describing the kinds of activities which interns should have an opportunity to experience.

For an analytical internship, the assignment should include activities such as gathering information, analyzing programs, designing proposals, supervising projects, representing the organization, and conducting and evaluating presentations.

Identifying Placement Locations

Depending upon where your school is geographically situated, identifying places where interns might be placed revolves around a couple of issues:

1. To what extent should interns be placed in local organizations?
2. To what extent should interns be placed in major organization markets?

The answer to both questions may be determined by where you are situated, by your resources, by your internship philosophy, and/or by your contacts. The overriding purpose of an internship should probably be for the student to receive some exposure to the kinds of problems and the types of activities associated with positions in organizations where he/she might like future employment. Hence, I would argue that interns should be placed in organizations that can provide the broadest, most comprehensive, most in-depth experience possible for students. Thus, placement locations in major metropolitan and market areas seem most desirable, although most urban areas of a quarter-million people or more usually have organizations which can offer interns a broad, quality experience.

Ideally, you should identify the nearest population center of a half-million people or more. Contact the Chamber of Commerce for a directory of business, industrial, and government organizations with headquarters, divisions, units, or major installations in the area. Develop a contact list of the top officers of the organizations in that area. Secure information about each of the businesses, industries, and agencies from their personnel departments so as to have a file of background information for determining which organizations might have potential internship possibilities.

Match organizations with your program, so that the preparation of your students will fit the experiences that appear to be possible in the orga izations. Select 10 to 20 organizations that seem to fit your needs.

Making Contacts and Signing the Contract

Approaches

Contacts can be made in one of two ways:

1. Cold turkey or
2. Referral

The cold turkey approach consists of taking the list of top officers of organizations identified for potential placement, calling each officer s identified for an appointment, and introducing the internship program wi a well-prepared presentation. The referral approach relies on receiving an introduction to a key officer through some personal acquaintance. Pe al friends, alumni, former students, associates in service clubs, church members, and other individuals whom you might know personally are usuall good contacts and are willing to provide an introduction.

The Visit

Advance preparation should be made so as to have a concise and clea formal presentation ready at the appointed hour. Adhere to the amenities of promptness, courtesy, and consideration when arriving and making the presentation. The presentation itself should be low-key and include infor tion about most of the following items:

1. The purpose of the intern program.
2. The sponsor and supervising college or department.
3. How students will be selected for participation.
4. Procedures for having the organization review applicants.
5. Length of time interns are available and amount of credit assign

6. Provisions for releasing or dismissing interns.
7. Supervision to be provided by the organization.
8. Supervision to be provided by the school or department.
9. Provisions for compensation, including travel.
10. Procedures and expectations for evaluation of interns.

Signing the Contract

A formal contract between the organization and the school should be signed to legitimize internship arrangements. All of the conditions mentioned above should be covered by the contract. Two different types of contracts are attached--a formal, legal document and an informal list of agreements.

Negotiating Intern Conditions

Once a contact has been made, the presentation completed, some agreement reached about placing interns, and a contract signed, more specific negotiations should be conducted concerning the learning experiences to be offered interns. Often, even with the presentation and some discussion about the internship program, officers of the organization consider the intern in a different light than intended by the school. In order to ensure proper use of interns and to assist them in getting the most value out of the internship, a clear and operational definition of the kinds of learning experiences to be made available to interns is essential. Reference should be made to the document which was prepared in advance and used in identifying types of internships.

Organizations are usually most interested in having interns placed when the interns can assist the organization to accomplish some of its goals.

A major concern during negotiations over intern conditions will usually be the extent to which the needs of the organization can be met by the placement of interns. Nevertheless, organization needs should not be allowed to completely dominate negotiations and turn the internships away from their initial objectives--to provide students with developmental experiences. Hence, it is most critical that a somewhat formal statement of what kinds of experiences the organization will provide interns be formulated and signed. This statement is usually in addition to the contract to accept interns. Both the immediate supervisor of the intern and the organization and the departmental or school academic advisor should have a copy of the conditions so that both will be able to ensure that the internship is productive for both the student and the organization.

Arguments that seem most persuasive with managers who make decisions about whether to accept interns tend to follow these lines of analysis:

1. Taking interns allows the company to make an investment in the future; the company may contribute to the development of manpower resources.
2. Taking interns represents a type of recruiting procedure; the company is able to have some experience with available applicants, many of whom may be prospective employees later.
3. Taking interns allows the company to prepare people who understand its point of view, potentially building a reservoir of supportive individuals in the general public.
4. Taking interns allows the company to have skilled assistance from people who can do special projects; the company can use interns rather than attempt to employ someone on a short-term basis.

5. Taking interns allows the company to have summer replacements for regular employees during vacation and other periods of time.
6. Taking interns provides skilled employees at a lower cost than could be arranged in the regular job market.
7. Taking interns allows the company to maintain a relationship with the academic community, with the potential of influencing the future preparation of students.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
Brigham Young University
Communication 399R

Professional Communication Experience

ALL STUDENTS MAJORING IN COMMUNICATION AT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AS A PART OF THEIR COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

1. This is intended as a true work experience in which the student is supervised by a competent professional. It is preferably conducted off campus in a full-time environment.

2. Part-time experiences and on-campus experiences will be accepted under special circumstances where there is on-site and faculty supervision.
   Campus experiences that will be considered would include the Daily Universe, KBYU, Motion Picture Production, Instructional Television, Sound Services, Photographic Services, and University Relations.

3. A maximum of four hours credit may be earned in 399R. It will be equated on the basis of a minimum of 40 hours of work for each hour of credit. No more than two hours of credit may be earned in a campus experience, and no more than two hours in a part-time situation, no matter what the length of the job. It should be noted that this is not intended to merely give credit for a part-time job. It must be a program of intellectual stimulation and growth in professional skills.

4. The student's work experience should be related as closely as possible to his field of study and individual interests.

5. Credit will not be granted for previous employment, but the department may waive the 399R requirement for those who have had significant professional experience.

6. Under special circumstances, one hour of credit will be granted for a faculty supervised experience that involves consulting with an off-campus client. These are mostly activities that will be used by those in speech and interpersonal communication.

7. A faculty member will prepare on-site supervision of the program and visit the student where that is feasible. At the very least he must develop, prior to the experience, a system of communication, supervision, and evaluation.

8. The employer should be requested and be willing to prepare an evaluation of the student's work.

9. Prior to registration, the student must submit an "Internship Approval Form" to the faculty member who is supervising the internship.

10. At the end of the semester, and during the semester if requested, the student should submit to the faculty adviser an evaluation of the total project, including supervision, work opportunities, and quality of the experience.

11. In order to be eligible, students must have achieved junior standing and taken the courses designated by the major program area as prerequisite to an internship. Internship students must have a 2.5 GPA.

12. The course operates under Grade Rule II (Pass/Fail.)

13. For students in speech or journalism education, student teaching takes the place of 399R.

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT
COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

DATE

EMPLOYER

SUPERVISOR

STATEMENT OF JOB PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

Each semester that a student is enrolled in the Cooperative Education Program, it is necessary that the university help the student determine what new or expanded responsibilities or learning opportunities are possible on his job. These objectives enable us to determine the learning value of the student's work experience.

These objectives should be specific and measurable. They will be reviewed with the supervisor. At the end of the semester, the student/employee and the supervisor will be asked to evaluate the level of attainment of each objective and relative value of each objective (in relation to the other objectives).

	*RATING		VAL. OF EA. OBJECTIVE (%)	
	STUDENT	SUPERVISOR	STUD.	SUPER.
1. _____	1.			
2. _____	2.			
3. _____	3.			
4. _____	4.			
5. _____	5.			

If you were to issue this student/employee a letter grade for the level of attainment of these objectives, what would it be: _____

*RATING SCALE

1. Meets minimum performance requirements (D-barely passing)
2. Normal or expected level of performance (C-average)
3. Meets and frequently exceeds expected performance (B-above average)
4. Unique performance (A-excellent)

AGREEMENT

We the undersigned agree with the validity of the learning objectives listed above. The employer and the university agree to provide the necessary supervision and counseling to insure that the maximum educational benefit may be achieved for the student/employee's work experience.

There are three participants in the Cooperative Education venture. The student agrees to abide by the Cooperative Education guidelines. The supervisor will evaluate the student/employee's performance objectives at the end of the grading period. The university will award academic credit for work successfully accomplished.

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE

INSTRUCTOR/COORDINATOR'S SIGNATURE

Brigham Young University
Professional Internship Program
In New York City

May 1 - June 23, 1978

Please complete this form and mail it to: Dr. Raymond E. Beckham
F-557 Harris Fine Arts Center
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602

Name of firm providing Internship for student_____

Address_____Telephone_____

Name of person within the firm who
will be supervising the student_____

(Biographical information about the student will be sent to the above person early in April.)

The student will be arriving in your offices at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, May 1, 1978. To whom should he/she report at that time?

Name_____

Office No._____

Amount of compensation being paid to the student, per week $_____

(Because the 25 interns who are participating in the Internship Program will be "pooling" all revenues, it would be preferable for their payroll checks to be made payable to Brigham Young University. If this is not possible, then the checks could be made payable to the individual student.) Please check which procedure would be preferable for you:

☐ We would be able to make the checks payable to Brigham Young University.

☐ We need to make the checks payable to the student.

Working hours. Unless otherwise specified by you, the student will work daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except Thursdays, when the hours will be 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in order for the student to attend a special professional seminar on Thursday afternoons and evenings.

☐ These hours are acceptable to us.

☐ We prefer the following hours_____

Special skills needed:

Other special needs you would like in the student:

Comments:

_____
(Signature)

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Communication Intern Agreement

THIS AGREEMENT is made by and between THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, a corporation of the State of New Mexico (hereinafter called the "University" or "Department"), and _____ _____ (hereinafter called the "Organization").

The Department and the Organization hereby agree as follows:

1. To participate in the Communication Intern Program, the purpose of which is to provide students of communication with an opportunity to receive practical experience in analyzing, preparing, presenting, applying, engaging in, and studying communication in all types of agencies, businesses, industries, and other organizations.

2. That the Department of Speech Communication of the College of Arts and Sciences within the University of New Mexico is recognized as the credit-granting, coordinating, and supervising sponsor of the Communication Intern Program.

3. That qualified students will be selected for participation in the Communication Intern Program from applications submitted to the Department. Interns shall be screened for specific skills relevant to the needs of the Organization.

4. That the Organization will accept an intern only after an official representative of the Organization has interviewed the prospective intern and given formal approval of the applicant.

5. That interns shall be assigned to the Organization for approximately 12 weeks commencing at the second week of a semester and terminating at the end of the thirteenth week. Changes in the length of an assignment may be made when acceptable to the Department, the Organization, and the Intern, but modifications in the number of weeks an intern shall be assigned to the Organization must be stated in writing.

6. That the Organization agrees to accept _____ (no.) intern(s) for _____ semester of the _____ school year for ____ hours per week. The intern will receive _____ credits for satisfactory completion of the internship.

7. That both the Organization and the Department have the right to release or dismiss an intern from his or her duties at any time. Violations of the rules, regulations, or requirements of the Organization, the University and/or the Department will be considered sufficient cause for dismissal.

8. That the Organization will provide direct supervision of the intern.

9. That the Department will provide an advisor who will be responsible for coordinating the academic activities of the intern.

(continued on reverse--)

10. That where interns are expected to live on-site in order to carry out assigned duties, the Organization will provide per diem or board and room for the intern.

11. That interns will provide their own transportation to and from their assignments within the City of Albuquerque; but that the Organization will furnish or pay for transportation to and from assignments outside city limits.

12. That the Organization may provide compensation to interns for services provided. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed sc as to imply that providing compensation is obligatory or even desirable. This provision is permissive only.

13. That, where possible, the Organization will make a financial contribution to the Development Fund of the Department to improve the quality of the intern program and to defray expenses associated with managing and operating the intern program.

14. That the Organization, the Department, and the intern shall be responsible for providing the following evaluations of intern performance:

a. The immediate supervisor of the intern in the Organization will submit to the Department a narrative report evaluating the performance, progress, and accomplishments of the intern, no later than one week following the intern's exit from the Organization.

b. The advisor of the intern in the Department will make periodic on-site observations of the intern's work, will meet with the intern, and will meet with the Organization supervisor to review the work of the intern.

c. The intern will submit a written report of his or her assignment, performance, organizational relationships, and progress to the departmental academic advisor. The report should include sections describing tasks, experiences in residence, ideas for improvement, training received, and abilities utilized. The report must be submitted within one week following the intern's exit from the Organization.

THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Date: _____ By _____
Chairman, Department Speech Communication

THE DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION

Date: _____ By _____
Faculty Advisor _____ Title

ORGANIZATION: _____
(Name)

Date: _____ By _____
Title _____

INTERN _____
(Name)

Date: _____ _____
(Signature of Intern)